

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 7-11 are pending in this application. Claims 7-11 are stand rejected. In view of the remarks set forth below, we believe the pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance.

Claims 7-9 and 11 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0158879 ("Broghammer") in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0059160 ("Rikitake"). Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

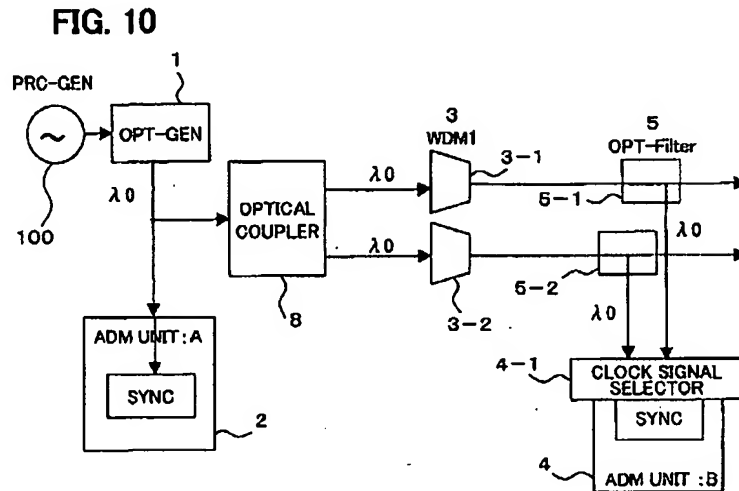
Among the limitations of independent claim 7 not present in the cited combination is "audio/video appliances connected to one another in a ring shape by said optical network, wherein data are transmitted between said audio/video appliances in said network in a first data channel having a first optical wavelength and in a second data channel having a second optical wavelength, each of said audio/video appliances having an optical coupler with filters for separating said first and second data channels."

The Office Action acknowledges that Broghammer does not explicitly disclose the above quoted limitation. After noting this deficiency, the Office Action introduces Rikitake. However, Rikitake fails to cure the noted deficiency in Broghammer.

The Examiner asserts that Rikitake discloses data transmitted between audio/video appliances in said network in a first data channel having a first optical wavelength and in a second data channel having a second optical wavelength and cites to Rikitake's Figure 10. However, Figure 10 of Rikitake fails to disclose the feature that the Examiner relies upon.

In Figure 10 of Rikitake reproduced below, signal generator 1 generates an optical clock signal, single wavelength λ_0 . This optical clock is split between two redundant fibers by optical

coupler 8. Further, each of the optical filters is used to process the optical clock signal of wavelength λ_0 so that each of the redundant paths is capable of providing the clock signal to a clock signal selector 4. (Rikitake at paragraphs 103-105).



Additionally, we note that in Figure 10, distinct components are disclosed for the system configuration. In contrast, the claims explicitly recite that each of the audio/video appliances has a first optical coupler with filters for separating the first and second data channels. However, in Rikitake a single frequency is provided over a pair of redundant fiber routes. Thus, Rikitake fails to cure the deficiencies noted in Broghammer by the Examiner in the Office Action.

All of the dependent claims are allowable based at least on their dependence on claim 7.

Applicant has responded to all of the rejections and objections recited in the Office Action. Reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance for all of the pending claims are therefore respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes an interview would be of assistance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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